

SOCIETY

FOR THE

Recovery of Persons apparently Drowned.

Whereas there are many incontestible proofs of the recovery of persons ~~and health~~, who have been taken out of the water for dead, altho' they had been for a considerable time without even the least sign of life; and ~~as there is the utmost reason to believe that~~ great numbers in such circumstances might have been restored, had they not been treated in an ~~un-
necessary~~ <sup>un-
necessary</sup> manner, or too hastily given up for lost:—Some gentlemen, induced by a principle of humanity, have undertaken to make public the following methods of treating such cases, which are now practised in several countries of Europe with amazing success; and also to promise suitable rewards to those who shall assist in putting them into execution.

I. In removing the body to a convenient place, great care must be taken that it be not bruised, nor shaken violently, nor roughly handled, nor carried over any one's shoulders with the head hanging downwards, nor rolled upon the ground or over a barrel, nor lifted up by the heels ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~body~~ ^{body} ~~may be~~ ^{may be} ~~restored~~ ^{restored} ~~by these methods~~ ^{by these methods} ~~are~~ ^{are} ~~entirely~~ ^{entirely} ~~dangerous~~ ^{dangerous}, and often destroy the small remains of life. The unfortunate object should be cautiously conveyed by two or more persons, or in a carriage upon straw, lying as on a bed with the head a little raised, and kept in as natural and easy a position as possible.

II. The body being well dried with a cloth, should be placed in a due degree of heat, but not too near a large fire. The windows or door of the room should ~~however~~ be left open, and no more persons be admitted into it than those who are absolutely necessary, as the life of the patient greatly depends upon ~~their~~ ^{the} being exposed to a pure air. The warmth most promising of success is that of a bed or a blanket, properly warmed. Bottles or bladders of hot water, or hot bricks wrapped in cloths, should be laid at the bottoms of the feet, in the joints of the knees, under the arm-pits, &c. The shirt or clothes of an attendant, the skin of a sheep fresh killed, the natural and kindly warmth of a healthy person lying by the side of the body, has been found in many cases very efficacious. Should these accidents happen in the neighbourhood of a warm bath, brew-house, baker, glass-house, saltern, soap-boiler, or any other fabrick where warm lees, ashes, embers, grains, sand, water, &c. are easily procured, it will be of the utmost service to place the body in ~~one~~ ^{one} of these, moderated to degree of heat, but very little exceeding that of a healthy person.

III. The subject being placed in one or other of these advantageous circumstances as speedily as possible, various stimulating methods should next be employed. The ~~first~~ ^{first} and most efficacious are,—to blow with force into the lungs, by applying the mouth to that of the patient, closing his nose with one hand, and gently expelling the air again by pressing the chest with the other, imitating the strong breathing of a healthy person. Whilst one assistant is ~~constantly~~ ^{constantly} employed in this operation, another should throw the smoke of tobacco up by the fundament into the bowels, by means of a tobacco-pipe or fumigator, such as are used in administering tobacco clysters: a pair of bellows ~~will serve~~ ^{will serve} until the others can be procured. A third attendant should, in the mean time, rub the belly, chest, back and arms, with a coarse cloth or flannel dipped in brandy, rum, gin, ~~and water~~ ^{and water}, or strong vinegar, so as not to rub off the skin: spirits of hartshorn, ~~ammoniac~~ ^{ammoniac} salts, or any other stimulating substance, must also be applied to the nostrils, and rubbed upon the temples very frequently. The body should at intervals be shaken also, and varied in its position. ~~N.B. Bronchotomy, or opening a passage to the lungs through the windpipe, may be necessary, when the air will not pass by the mouth into the chest, but this must be always left to the judgment of a surgeon.~~

IV. If there be any signs of returning life, such as gasping, twitching, or any convulsive motions, the return of the natural colour and warmth, and of the pulse, bleeding either in the arm or jugular vein, or temporal artery, now becomes particularly necessary. The throat should ~~also~~ ^{also} be ~~with~~ ^{with} a feather, in order to excite a propensity to vomit; and the ~~no~~ ^{no} with a feather, snuff, or any other stimulant, so as to produce sneezings. A tea-spoonful of warm water may be administered now and then, in order to learn whether the power of swallowing be returned; and if it be, a table-spoonful of warmed wine, or brandy and water, may be given with advantage, but not before; as the liquor might get into the lungs before the power of swallowing returns. The other methods should be continued with vigour, until the patient be gradually restored. ~~The superintendence of a practitioner in physic may be requisite for a day or two, to administer such assistance as symptoms may indicate.~~

We have been as circumstantial as possible in the above directions, in order that if one conveniency should be wanting, the attendants may not be at a loss for others. Where the patient has lain but a short time senseless, blowing into the lungs or bowels has been, in some cases, found sufficient: yet a speedy recovery is not to be expected in general. On the contrary, the above methods are to be continued with spirit for two hours, or upwards, although there should not be the least symptoms of returning life. The vulgar notion that a person will recover in a few minutes, or not at all, and the ignorant, foolish ridiculing, of those who are willing to persevere as if they were attempting impossibilities, has most certainly caused the death of many who might otherwise have been saved.

Most of the above rules are happily of such a nature, that they may be begun immediately, and that by persons who are not acquainted with the medical art; yet it is always advisable to seek the assistance of some regular practitioner as soon as possible, not only as bleeding is always proper, and sometimes essentially necessary, but as it is to be presumed that such a one will be more skilful and expert, and better able to vary the methods of procedure as circumstances may require.

We ~~pleased ourselves~~ ^{pleased ourselves} with the prospect of being extensively useful, merely by making these easy and practicable methods publickly known. We now hope that such unhappy objects will not any longer be abandoned by spectators, before they be actually dead, nor treated in an improper, injurious, or ~~superficial~~ ^{superficial} manner. And although we cannot flatter ourselves that every one, even by the most advantageous treatment, will be restored, yet we rejoice in the thoughts of calling many from the gates of death, and their relatives out of the depth of distress. Nor can we doubt but that numbers will be inclined to give all the assistance in their power in such alarming cases, seeking no other reward than the pleasure of doing good, the inexpressible joy of rendering back a father to his afflicted family, or a child to its distracted parents; remembering that they also may stand in need of the same friendly offices to themselves or connections.

But in order to excite a more general attention to this important object, the Society have ~~passed~~ ^{passed} the following Resolutions.

I. To distribute a reward of two guineas amongst the first four persons, who shall attempt to recover any DROWNED person, whether man, woman, or child, within the bill of mortality, provided they make use of the methods above recommended, and no others, unless under the direction of a regular practitioner, for the space of two full hours, although they have not been successful; and provided also there be no signs of putrefaction upon the body. ~~has not been under water longer than 2 hours.~~

II. To distribute a reward of four guineas in like manner whenever life has been restored by these means.

III. ~~Expressly to recommend~~ ^{Expressly to recommend} to publicans and the spot where the accident has happened, to receive the unfortunate object into their houses, without hesitation, as the delay of a few minutes may be of fatal consequence; and that they may not suffer from their humanity, the Society will secure them from the expences of burying the dead, and allow one guinea in consideration of the trouble they may take.

The claimants must apply to the Treasurer, within three days, who will strictly enquire into the justice of their claim, and pay the money within fourteen days, after it shall appear to be merited.

It is advisable immediately to seek the assistance of the nearest practitioner in physic; but in order the more effectually to secure speedy help, the following gentlemen offer their assistance gratis, in any case that shall happen within the limits mentioned below; and half a crown will be given to the first messenger bringing information of the disaster to the gentleman in whose division it happened; provided it shall appear that no imposition was intended.

The following persons also declare their willingness to receive unfortunate objects into their houses, and provide them every necessary.

~~The Society confine its attention to the objects who are particularly to require it in and about this metropolis; yet they think it proper to hint, that the means of restoration are equally applicable to various other cases of apparent deaths; such as hanging, suffocation by damps and noxious vapours, whether proceeding from coal-mines, the confined air of wells, cisterns, caves, or the must of fermenting liquors; to those seized with apoplectic and convulsive fits, and also to the frozen. And they hope that some persons of influence in the parts where such accidents mostly happen, will form a similar institution for the recovery of the unhappy victims.~~

N.B. The frozen should not be brought into the degree of warmth recommended above too soon: they should first be rubbed with snow, or spunged with cold water, and this, with all the other means, should be continued for some time, and then gradual warmth will become proper. Wherever any good has been produced by the means recommended, the person who has superintended the cure is desired to write a circumstantial account of it to Mr. J. B. Rich, No. 4, Field-court, Gray's inn, Holborn, Secretary to the Society.

Those who are willing to encourage this humane attempt to lessen the distresses of mankind, are informed that the following places are appointed to receive their subscriptions.